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Amy Carter Tells Court She Sat in Road to Stop C.I.A. Crimes

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NORTHAMPTON, Mass., April 13 — Amy Carter testified today that she climbed up a fire escape and through a window into a college administration building, and later sat down to block a bus carrying arrested protesters, because she thought it would help end illegal activities in Central America by the Central Intelligence Agency.

"Every time a person sacrifices themselves for a larger injustice, it aids in the cycle of change," said the daughter of former President Jimmy Carter. Now 19 years old and a sophomore at Brown University, Miss Carter is charged with disorderly conduct at a protest rally Nov. 24 at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst.

She echoed the testimony of others among the 15 defendants, who admit to the acts they are charged with but argue that their disorderly conduct and trespassing were justified to prevent greater evils.

Judge Richard Connon is, for now, allowing testimony on the C.I.A.'s activities in Central America; that, along with the presence of Miss Carter and the 1960's radical Abbie Hoffman among the defendants, has focused unusual attention on the trial in State District Court here, which the defendants characterize as "the C.I.A. on trial."

The courtroom was filled with spectators and reporters as Miss Carter testified today; at one point Judge Connon told a photographer with a noisy camera to stop shooting.

Asked by the prosecutor, Diane Fernald, why she had left the building before the arrests began there, Miss Carter talked about the power of her family name to overshadow weeks of hard work by fellow protesters.

"Because of the publicity and things like that, I didn't feel it was fair for me to join in an action before I met everyone and had seen what their feelings are," she said. But she said she decided to be arrested when she saw the actions of police officers in riot gear.

After the judge and jury left for lunch, the audience gave Miss Carter a standing ovation and she embraced a fellow defendant.

The defense rested its case this afternoon after calling Miss Carter and other defendants to the stand and presenting a series of experts, including a former C.I.A. agent, former Government officials and specialists in intelligence matters, to testify about

their belief that the agency was involved in assassinations, torture, and other illegal activities.

Edgar Chamorro, a former leader of the contras fighting the Marxist-led Government of Nicaragua, testified on Friday about C.I.A. involvement with those opposition forces. Ralph McGehee, who as a C.I.A. agent was the chief adviser to the South Vietnamese secret police during the war there, said that he had been part of an assassination project in that country.

Also last week, Daniel Ellsberg, a former National Security Council aide, testified that he had been motivated to release the Pentagon Papers to The New York Times and other newspapers by the acts of individual war resisters during the Vietnam War.

Ramsey Clark, who was Attorney General in the Johnson Administration, testified along similar lines this afternoon. "I believe that if Rosa Parks had not refused to move to the back of the bus," he said, referring to the event that led to a boycott of segregated buses in Montgomery, Ala., "you and I might never have heard of Dr. Martin

Luther King."

Mr. Clark also testified that he had been lied to by the director and general counsel of the C.I.A. while he was Attorney General, and that the agency "seems uninhibited by law."

Judge May Not Allow Approach

The lawyers for the protesters are led by Leonard I. Weinglass, who defended Mr. Hoffman and other members of the "Chicago Seven" in the famous trial after the 1968 Democratic National Convention. The defense is seeking to show that the protesters felt their action was necessary to prevent the C.I.A. from breaking the law. While Judge Connon has allowed testimony on the agency's activity, he may later tell the jury to disregard it or he may omit mention of this "necessity defense" in instructing the jurors.

All the charges are misdemeanors. Of the 60 who were arrested, about half have already been sentenced to fines or suspended fines; none have been jailed.

The prosecution has sought to focus the jury's attention on whether the defendants felt themselves at risk because of the C.I.A., and whether they could have expected to change national policy.

Ms. Fernald has also pointed out that the goals of the demonstrators included two issues not directly related

to the agency: non-prosecution of students apprehended in an earlier demonstration, and changes in the enforcement of the university's "picketing code." She has also sought to show that the university was considering these issues before the students took over the building, Munson Hall.

The case has been something of a personal trial for Miss Carter. The National Enquirer has been asking questions about her academic record; The Star, another supermarket tabloid, sent a reporter to find out if she had a boyfriend. And she has been peppered with questions about her parents.

In response to a reporter's question today, she said that her parents had read a newspaper article about Mr. Ellsberg's testimony, and that she had spoken to them by telephone over the weekend.

"My parents told me they were proud of me," she said. "They said they were surprised we had accomplished this much and gotten this far."